

# PD Connection

LINKING PRACTITIONERS AND RESOURCES

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## Greetings!

or as we say in Australia, g'day mate. This edition of your PD Connection brings you information on reading, writing and math. You will also find a follow-up article on using chat rooms in Angel. Chat rooms can be a wonderful way of sharing information and keeping in touch with other adult educators. Many Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute (KAELI) participants greatly enjoyed the online networking and discussions that were part of their learning activities. These and other learning experiences will continue for KAELI through the Alumni.

The feature article in this edition is by a KAELI graduate, Susan Watson and Susan shares her ideas about reading groups.

[www.kyvae.org](http://www.kyvae.org)

On page 4, Wayne Couvillion, Jefferson County Adult Education discusses three lessons which can make a difference for math students. It is great to have talented adult educators willing to share their ideas. To coin an old phrase, PD Connection is *of you, by you and for you* so please let us know what you want and contribute your ideas and strategies.

The next editor will be Cindy Read, Family Literacy Specialist, the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy and you are asked to send articles and ideas to [cread@famlit.org](mailto:cread@famlit.org).

Cheers

Toni-Ann

Toni-Ann Mills, CCLD Director - Adult Education (KAELI), [tamil2@uky.edu](mailto:tamil2@uky.edu)

## Reading Groups in Adult Education

by Susan Watson,

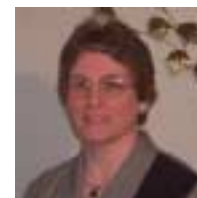
Powell County Adult Literacy, [swatson@powell.k12.ky.us](mailto:swatson@powell.k12.ky.us)

In adult education, it is very important to realize, that most students come to our programs not ready to read at the levels necessary to achieve their goals. Reading is a most vital piece in their attempt to reach their goals. This is why we must pay extremely close attention to the reading instruction provided through adult education.

Reading groups can have a tremendous effect on student's reading ability, and interest in reading. Adult educators assess student's academic abilities to set up student educational plans. I have found that most students do not have a solid reading background and a number of them have never fostered a desire to read.

They are able to read what they "have to" for everyday life. They are not aware of techniques to increase their reading levels, or to know what it means to be a lifelong reader. Many students have never been given the opportunity to select quality reading material through book reviews, or through peer groups.

*continued over page*



When they enter our programs they have goals that they want to reach. They usually do not realize the role that reading plays in reaching these goals. It is the responsibility of the instructor to assist the student in realizing their reading needs and potential. This is where quality reading instruction becomes focused.

The Kentucky Adult Educators Literacy Institute (KAELI) is optimistic that it is nurturing the quality reading instruction that our adult education programs need. An important part of KAELI is the implementation of reading groups. Reading groups encourage adults to be more actively involved in the reading process while participating in a group situation. The students are learning questioning techniques as well as developing reading comprehension.


After implementing these processes in our reading instruction the adults involved became extremely interested in the next book, and the next book, and so on. During this process I feel that I have effectively implemented lifelong reading in the adults who were involved in my reading groups. They are now actively selecting books to read, and they are aware of the techniques for selecting books. The students involved have seen their reading levels increase through pre and post testing results. They are also aware of how their comprehension of their reading material has increased.

Students are taking their love of reading to higher levels; they are now selecting books that are more challenging.


This was also evident through the generative theme, KAELI Task 6. To me this task seemed to require too much independent study for my adult education students. However, during our reading group, as we experienced the book "Women in the Material World", the students became very inquisitive about the characters. This began the journey they would take during their "Generative Theme".

They truly followed the steps without much assistance. Some students needed help with the computer, but not the questions and answers. They successfully followed the task. They were incredibly proud of their work, and so was I. The students involved in the reading groups are always asking for reading material, and review titles critically.

KAELI allowed me to review our resources, and to implement good quality research-based techniques and curriculum into our adult education program. I plan to continue to produce new ideas within our adult education reading program and want to expand on the number of participants in the reading groups, and use statistical data to support our findings.



***In adult education we must give students the divine opportunity to successfully select quality reading materials, and to assist and follow a student's progress through a means relevant to that particular student.***



## Grammar Websites

When in doubt about a grammatical question, there are many helpful online guides that can answer any tricky mechanics/grammar questions. Patterson, N. & Pipkin, G. (2001) Grammar in the labyrinth: Resources on the World Wide Web.

*Voices from the Middle*, 8(3), 63-67.

### ***Guide to Grammar and Writing***

<http://webster.commnet.edu/grammar/index.htm>

### ***The Internet TESL Journal***

<http://a4esl.org/q/h/grammar.html>

### ***Grammar Bytes***

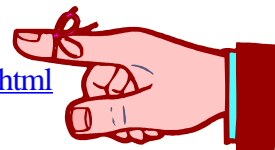
[www.chompchomp.com/menu.htm](http://www.chompchomp.com/menu.htm)

### ***Grammar Safari***

<http://deil.lang.uiuc.edu/web/pages/grammarsafari.html>

### ***The Online English Grammar***

[www.edufind.com/english/grammar/index.cfm](http://www.edufind.com/english/grammar/index.cfm)





## Which Came First the Writer or the Story?

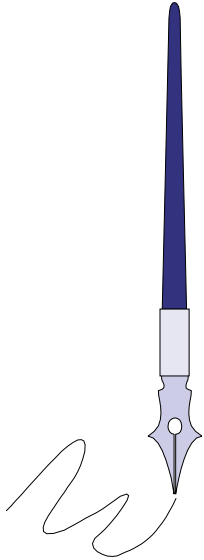
by Pam Petty, KAEI Director, Western Kentucky University,

pam@pampetty.com



What do the following people have in common?

- Dave Pelzer (*A Child Called It*)
- Frank McCourt (*Angela's Ashes*)
- Alice Sebold (*Lucky*)
- Rick Bragg (*All Over but the Shoutin'*)
- Maya Angelou (*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*)
- Barbara Robinette Moss (*Change Me into Zeus's Daughter*)
- Leon Walter Tillage (*Leon's Story*)



***Once you have walked  
this path, you will be  
ready to lead others.  
Something tells me  
that the road to true  
writing is one that is  
best traveled with a  
friend. I wish you  
pleasant and  
magnificent travels!***

Dr. Pam Petty



Yes, they are all writers, but dig deeper. What is the common denominator of all these writers? None of them have zoomed in a space shuttle to the moon, discovered the cure for something that saved millions of lives, or in other ways lived extraordinary lives, yet they have all managed to carve a work of art from one simple thing – their **stories**.

Now comes the big question: *Were they writers who wanted to tell their stories, or were they people who felt compelled to tell their stories so they learned to write? Do their stories inspire the brilliance of their writing, or does their ability to write make their stories brilliant?* Although the true “answer” is likely more a combination than a clear cut one-or-the-other scenario, the more important question to us as educators is, how do we allow for both circumstances in our learners?

Adult learners come to us with one magnificent common denominator – they have stories, just like the authors listed above. Perhaps their stories speak of poverty (Mccourt, Tillage, Bragg, Moss), abuse (Moss, Pelzer), violence (Sebold, Tillage), racism (Angelou, Tillage), or other social ills. Perhaps also like the authors listed above their stories are of courage, comfort, triumph, and love. Whatever the story, they are unique to each person and they are all worth telling. These personal stories are supreme opportunities for our learners to learn the art of writing, the mechanics of the language, and the pleasure that comes from telling a story that longs to be told. Our challenge as educators is to motivate, support, teach, and inspire these would-be writers. If we value the ability to write, what better way to “sell” the concept to our adult learners than to become writers ourselves? As a storyteller I have been writing family stories for several years. These are tips I try to keep in mind as I prepare to write:

- Stories are “built” around events, moments, sounds, smells, glimpses of time
- Don’t expect all the details to come to you at once – start with a kernel of an idea and watch it grow
- Keep the “gotcha” part of the story simple
  - Some of the most poignant stories are fairy tales and folk tales
  - Stay away from didactic language (“preaching”) – allow the theme of your story to linger, slowly be absorbed by the reader/listener
- Don’t feel compelled to finish every story you start – they all won’t be worth the time. Some stories need time to “perk.” Put them in a folder and let them age then look at them again. You will get a feel for when they and YOU are ready
- Read. Read some more. See how others tell their stories, pay attention to how the author manipulates you – makes you smile, makes you cry, makes you CARE.

Don’t be afraid to tell YOUR story – no one else can!

## Passing the Math: Three Lessons Which Can Make a Difference

By Wayne Couvillion, Jefferson County Adult Education, [wcouvil2@jefferson.k12.ky.us](mailto:wcouvil2@jefferson.k12.ky.us)

Have you ever wondered what you might have done differently for a learner who barely missed passing the math portion of the GED? Could you have offered that learner a final “push” which might have carried her or him over the line? If you could have had that learner review three lessons prior to taking the Official Practice Test (OPT) or the GED, which lessons would you choose?

An analysis of OPT scores administered at the Ahrens Enrollment Center, Jefferson County revealed interesting data regarding items missed by the 116 testers in the study who did not pass the math portion of the OPT, Form PA. To pass the OPT a tester must score an average of 450 on all five tests: Language Arts Reading, Language Arts Writing, Science, Social Studies, and Math. No score less than 410 will be accepted as a passing score. The only scores used in this informal study were those whose math conversion score was from 400 through 440.

**Table A** shows the ten most frequently missed problems, along with the type of math problem and the item description. **Table A** reveals very interesting information about the most frequently missed problems on the OPT Form PA.

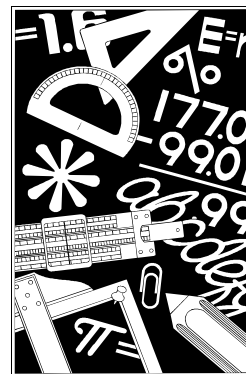
Of the ten most frequently missed problems geometry and/or algebra was needed on 8 of these. Several of these required the use of one single concept from geometry, but with the use of algebraic techniques to solve these problems. A review of several algebraic concepts would be in order along with a review of some basic geometry, but the use of both geometry and algebra, intertwined, would put the student in a much more favorable position.

From this information the following three lessons should prove most helpful to your students prior to OPT or GED testing.

**Lesson #1: Algebra Review:** Simplifying and evaluating expressions, solving one and two-step equations, data analysis, and algebra application problems.

**Lesson #2: Geometry Review:** Perimeter and area, similar triangles, ratio & proportion, sum of angles in a triangle, Pythagorean Theorem, complementary angles, supplementary angles, vertical angles.

**Lesson #3: Using Algebra to Solve Geometry Problems:** This lesson should focus on the identification of the one concept from geometry which might be needed within a certain problem and how an algebraic equation can be set up and solved using this concept.



**Table A: Item Analysis OPT Math Form PA**

Item	Frequency	Type	Description
#25	91	Geometry: similar figures	Compute area, ratio & proportion
#12	90	Percent	Interest calculation (2-step)
#8	84	Geometry: triangle area	Area calculation using algebra
#24	82	Algebra	Equation setup
#10	81	Percent	Compute percent (2-step)
#11	78	Geometry: rectangle area	Area calculation using algebra
#13	76	Computation or algebra	Calculate mean
#9	74	Algebra	Evaluate algebraic expression
#17	69	Geometry: triangle measure	Find angles using algebra
#18	67	Geometry: similar triangles	Find sides, ratio & proportion

## More About Using Chat Rooms in Angel

by Randolph Hollingsworth, KYVU, [dolph@kyvu.org](mailto:dolph@kyvu.org)

In Angel, you can create your own “group.” In a group you can set up a chat room under the “In Touch” tab — look at the directions in the Orientation to Angel folder in your online PD course. Try it! Any problems, call the KYVAE 24/7 Computer Support.

Chat rooms may seem a little intimidating at first. Suggest to your students or peers that they listen (or “read” as the case may be) before speaking (or “typing”). You might want to have in your first sessions some helpful strategies for the participants to follow, e.g.,

- Participants must wait until the instructor or host moderator asks a question before they can type
- Participant answers can only be a maximum of two lines.

A good educational Chat facility should have up front a very clear Rules and Guidelines which should be upheld and enforced. If a new Chat room is opened during one of your sessions, ensure that a host oversees the chat and leads the chat as a teacher in a classroom or an online moderator. Use the Chat room for a brainstorming activity for a lesson, then post the chat text in a Message Board area for everyone to see. For Chat rooms to be used most effectively within an educational context, it is vital that learners have genuine opportunities to express their views, learn from one another, and initiate new Chat sessions.

### Plan Your Chat Session as Carefully as You Would Any Lesson Activity

**First:** decide what are the learning objectives for the online chat and write them out as simply and clearly as possible; then, publish in advance what topics and questions will be discussed.

**Second:** assign a pre-discussion task for the participants and set the basic ground rules - get any questions about what is proper “netiquette” out up front.

**Third:** in the discussion itself, state your objective(s) and directions for the chat clearly - encourage substantiated statements - not just opinions or emoticons; don’t let latecomers interrupt you or others - select that person’s name and “whisper” some summarizing points to catch them up; be sure to be the one who provides a conclusion to the chat - above all, begin and end on time!

**Fourth:** conduct some sort of post-discussion activity, e.g., post a concluding summary, require a homework activity, or ask participants to complete a survey or poll. Perhaps most importantly, understand that chat is a synchronous activity, which means it is done in real-time. Be selective about giving assignments in which learners have to use the Chat room; one reason they chose to learn online was probably because they wanted to do their assignments any time of the day in an asynchronous manner.

*Next PD Connection - how to deal with serious problems in the room and some resources to access.*

### Example of Chat Rules to Post

We want this to be a fun and friendly place where you can meet people, have nice conversations, and make friends. In order to keep it that way, we have set up the following RULES and guidelines for this room. Please read and follow them.

#### DO NOT USE ALL CAPS!

It means you’re yelling, it’s hard to read, and it’s considered rude.

#### No name calling, racial slurs, or abusive language

You may be expelled or banned immediately without warning for this behavior.

Please keep your language acceptable

- No offensive or racist remarks will be tolerated
- No name-calling or childish arguing (including the use of profanity with regard to another)
- No personal insults or silly arguments are allowed
- No threats or harassments.

## KAELI: A Manager's Perspective

by Janice Crane, Program Manager, Jessamine Co. JCRANE@jessamine.k12.state.ky

Tempering experience with new ways is often a struggle among the more historically rooted adult educators. Those that have been “around” for decades have literally watched the changing narratives of adult education unfold into a brand new paradigm of what it means to be literate, and how adult educators are to serve. The learner is no longer as easily defined, and what is to be learned is now virtually without limits.

Transition and change require time to thoroughly examine new ideas, reflect upon findings, and develop opportunities for practice. Change of this magnitude is not only a complex process, but must be carefully orchestrated so not to cause more harm than good.

KAELI, even with its sometimes-complicated directives, prolonged duration, and need for adaptations, provided such an experience for me. Its underlying principles, practices, and delivery system offered adult educators insight into how to better prepare learners for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. KAELI provided the opportunity to explore valuable resource materials of the reading and writing process and allowed participants to examine their own beliefs and practices, a valuable procedure to do especially working in a field that is continually changing.

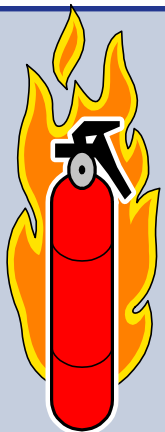
For the program manager, the KAELI learning tasks served as a format for evaluating delivery systems and program design and helped to identify the professional development needs of staff.

The experience of doing the tasks made it possible to distinguish how certain instructional approaches fit into a program's delivery system and helped me to identify what is doable and what needs to be changed. In addition, the activities offered insight as to the strengths and weaknesses of staff in using a KAELI approach to learning.

Program managers don't need the same KAELI experience as instructors, but they do need to know enough about KAELI to create an atmosphere and structure for learning and practice, and to provide adequate support and mentoring for their instructors who do participate. In order to implement KAELI teachings into adult education programs, managers need to begin blending, adapting, and changing the status quo of their programs to include aspects of KAELI—one step at a time.

***“... You got to start somewhere. Little steps lead to big steps. Remember that . . . It's always scary when you step out and do something new. Don't worry about that. Just remember to step. That's the important thing.”***

**Heartwood,  
Nicky Finney, p.17**



### Hot Sites

For resources and annotations of each of the books listed in the article Which Came First the Writer or the Story?, please visit:

<http://www.pampetty.com/writers.htm>



## What is Professional Development?

Professional development is defined as those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students (Guskey, 2000).

Professional development is a change process “in which instructors acquire a body of knowledge and skills to improve the quality of teaching for learners and, ultimately, to enhance learner outcomes.”

(Kutner et al, 1997, p 1).

Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education’s professional development focus is on instruction—what we teach. It is about teacher quality, aligning curriculum, and using research-based practices and strategies to ensure quality instruction that supports student learning.

### Defining Characteristics of Professional Development

- *It is an intentional process*
- *It is an ongoing process*
- *It is a systemic process.*

### Coaching Models

- **Peer Coaching** typically involves two or more teachers observing in each other’s classrooms to hone their instructional skills.
- **Collegial coaching** involves two or more teachers collaborating to enhance an area of instruction that the observed teacher wishes to study.
- **Challenge coaching** focuses on resolving a persistent instructional problem.
- **Cognitive coaching** supports a teacher’s own reflection on his or her instruction.
- **Technical coaching** helps teachers transfer ideas from a professional development session into classroom practice.

From: The Journal of the National Staff Development Council, Spring 2003, p.65.



## Tech Tips



When you’re on the internet and you want to go to a new site, hit F6 and the browser address line will be highlighted and ready to be replaced by a new web address. Try it now. Hit F6 and type <http://adulthood.state.ky.us> then hit enter and you’ll be at the Kentucky Adult Education, Council on Postsecondary Education website in two clicks!

Tonya Crum, Kentucky Adult Education,  
Council on Postsecondary Education.

Submit your own tech tips for future editions of this newsletter by e-mailing [tonya.crum@mail.state.ky.us](mailto:tonya.crum@mail.state.ky.us). See you online!

## In Celebration of the Adult Learner

*From Jackie Robertson and Carol Thompson, Hancock County.*

Here is a poem that the Western Kentucky KAELI Cadre all started in July!

Thank you SO much to those two fine KAELI folks for weaving such a magnificent piece of literature. You can find this poem on-line at: <http://www.pampetty.com/kaeli/contributions.htm>

We celebrate those

Who make time for their children's plays  
Who listen to squeaky violins and off-key pianos  
Who put every drawing on the refrigerator  
Who run to Wal-Mart at 10 p.m. for poster board  
and markers  
Who watch 101 Dalmatians 101 times  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate those

Who have to do it all alone  
Whose children's shoes are never new enough to  
squeak  
Who can never fill their children's plates  
Who want the best and know the worst  
Who can't allay their children's fears  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate those

Who learned and earned  
Who eat dessert first  
Who know their children's friends  
Whose dog ate their homework  
Who visit family every Sunday  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate those

Who have ever eaten from a dumpster  
Who thought that education was just for others  
Who never saw the beauty in a single wildflower  
Who never knew their parents  
Who had to give up their children  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate those

Who study in their pajamas  
Who serve takeout three days running  
Who do laundry at midnight  
Who wake up the kids when Santa comes  
Who never miss a game, win or lose  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate those

Who don't have time to study  
Who take out food stamps at the checkout  
Who do laundry if they have enough quarters  
Whose children don't believe in Santa  
Whose game is survival every day  
Who never quit the game of life

We celebrate all those

Who reach for our helping hand  
Who are starting over, against all odds  
Who never quit the game of life

Inspired by: A Prayer for Children



## Best Wishes

Kentucky Adult Education professional development branch says good-bye to three wonderful staff members.



### Jane Martel

Jane started a new job at the National Center for Family Literacy on July 1. Jane is serving as the instructional designer for the Verizon Literacy University. You can say hi to Jane at [jmartel@famlit.org](mailto:jmartel@famlit.org).



### Lyda Phillips

Lyda accepted a job at the Department for Employment Services. She will be assisting with training and communications. You can contact Lyda at [lydak.phillips@mail.state.ky.us](mailto:lydak.phillips@mail.state.ky.us)



### Tracy Roberts

Tracy had an opportunity to work closer to home and she accepted a position at the Shelbyville Area Technology Center.

These three will be greatly missed, but we wish them all the best.

## Bridges to Practice

This newly revised LD training will be offered regionally this year. This is a blended training with an online component to be completed between Phase I and Phase II. Here are the dates and locations for Phase I and II (you are expected to attend both sessions):

- \*Aug 11 and Sept 8, Campbell Co Cooperative Extension Office
- \*Oct 10 and Nov 14, Johnson Co, Paintsville
- \*Oct 3 and Oct 17, London, Laurel Co ALC,
- \*Oct 28 and Nov 11, Russellville, Logan Co ALC
- \*Oct 16 and Nov 13, Mt. Sterling
- \*Nov 7 and Nov 14, Ahrens ALC, Louisville
- \*Mar 12 and 19, 2004, Ahrens ALC, Louisville

More detailed information may be found at [www.kyvae.org](http://www.kyvae.org) on the professional development calendar.

Please register for LD training by using the adult education registration form and fax or mail to Sandra Kestner.

## Calender of Events...

The complete PD Calendar at [www.kyvae.org](http://www.kyvae.org) has information about many opportunities including:

- ***Orientation to PLATO Workshop (Christian County) August 11-12***
- ***Orientation to PLATO Workshop (Bowling Green) August 13-14***

### COMING SOON!

- ***Orientation to Program Management Hampton Inn, Frankfort September 4-5, 2003***
- ***Adult Education and Family Literacy Conference Marriot Griffin Gate, Lexington, September 22-23.***

### NATIONAL

- ***Twentieth Annual Rutgers Invitational Symposium on Education Defining and Improving Quality in Adult Basic Education: Issues and Challenges.***

<http://www.gse.rutgers.edu/conted/20thRise.pdf>



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